

but by the early 1960s Martin guitars were back-ordered as much as 3 years.

In 1990, the company formalized its long-standing ecological policy which embraced the responsible use of natural materials and promoted the use of sustainable yield, alternative wood varieties.

Adopting such a progressive policy nearly 20 years ago has helped broaden the use of sustainable materials within the guitar industry over the last two decades and illustrates Martin's admirable dedication to responsible production. Martin's amazing longevity in a constantly changing industry is a true testament to the strength of the company's management and its commitment to crafting guitars of the highest quality.

Mr. Speaker, the Martin Guitar Company has been a source of tremendous pride in the Lehigh Valley of Pennsylvania for generations. Today, I rise to congratulate the Martin family and their many employees on 175 years of achievement. I wish them many, many more years of incredible success. We are extraordinarily proud of them.

IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, those who support our occupation of Iraq often justify it by saying that there will be a terrible humanitarian crisis if our troops leave. They must have missed the memo about the humanitarian crisis that already exists in Iraq. And they must be blind to the humanitarian crisis that goes on every day right here in America because of the occupation.

Last week, the Rand Corporation issued a shocking report which measured the crisis at home. The report found that 300,000 troops who have returned from Iraq and Afghanistan suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder or major depression; that's about 20 percent of all the troops who have been deployed. The numbers are truly staggering, but when you add all the family members who are affected, you realize that we will never be able to calculate the full human toll of the Iraq invasion.

Mr. Speaker, the study was the first complete analysis of PTSD and depression problems. It should have been conducted by our government, our government, which, by the way, has the greatest responsibility for the care of our veterans, but it wasn't. It was conducted by the Rand Corporation, a private, nonprofit organization. The co-director of the report said one of the reasons that RAND did the study was because the Pentagon didn't, and they wanted to have the numbers. It is outrageous that our own Department of Defense didn't know how many of our veterans were suffering from PTSD and from major depression. How did our

government expect to address this health crises if it didn't know the full extent of it?

This is another example, Mr. Speaker, of the administration failing our troops. But it's hardly the only example. Over 125,000 veterans of the fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan are on disability for hearing loss and other hearing problems. One of the chief reasons is the Pentagon's failure to fully anticipate the problem of road-side bombs. The blasts from these bombs cause violent changes in air pressure that can rupture the eardrum and break bones inside the ear.

And most tragically, we are learning that the government may be trying to cover up the problem of suicide among veterans. In a trial that opened yesterday, two organizations are suing the Department of Veterans Affairs for failing to provide adequate care to prevent suicides among veterans. An e-mail written by the head of the Mental Health Services for the VA was shown at that very trial. The e-mail referred to approximately 1,000 veterans under the VA's care who attempt suicide every month. And the memo said, "Shhhh! Is this something we should carefully address ourselves in some order of press release before someone stumbles on it?" This is incredible. The Veterans Administration is trying to figure out whether to hide the truth from the American people about the extent of the suicide problem among our veterans. What a disgrace.

Mr. Speaker, we have a solemn duty to care for our veterans, to honor them for their sacrifice, and the best way to honor those who have been injured is to make certain that more aren't injured. That means we must responsibly redeploy our troops out of Iraq. And it means we must get on with the task of helping the people of Iraq to rebuild their lives and their country, and healing the wounds of our veterans right here at home. The administration will not do it. It is up to Congress to do it.

We owe it to our veterans, to the American people, to the Iraqi people. And Mr. Speaker, we owe it to ourselves.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE DRUG CONVICTION QUESTION AND FEDERAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, both the Washington Post and the New York Times reported that under

the Bush administration the military has increasingly granted so-called "conduct waivers" to allow more people with criminal records, including drug convictions, to serve in the Armed Forces. As a matter of fact, conduct waivers granted for felonies and other crimes constitute the majority of all waivers, about 60 percent for the Army, and 75 percent for the Marine Corps.

It is important to note that the vast majority of such convictions stem from juvenile offenses, but at the same time, a provision of the Higher Education Act, which Congress is currently in the process of reauthorizing, bars young people with drug convictions from receiving Federal financial aid to go to college. I find it absolutely alarming that the Bush administration seems to think that youth who are prone to youthful indiscretions and get into trouble with drug use are, on the one hand, not worthy of Federal support to obtain a college education, but on the other hand, are perfectly fit to go and to fight the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Because of what many have termed the "Drug War Draft," countless students with minor drug convictions are turned away from the university financial aid office only to be funneled across the street to the military recruiting office. While there is absolutely nothing wrong with giving young people with past drug convictions an opportunity to redeem themselves in service to our country by joining the armed services, it is a moral outrage that current law blocks redemption through educational opportunities to these same individuals.

When asked about the conduct waivers, the Army's Operations Chief Lieutenant General James Thurman stated, "You've got to give people an opportunity to serve." Well, I thoroughly agree with the general, people should be able to contribute to this society in whatever way they best can, whether by enlisting in the military or by enrolling in school and obtaining the skills needed to become productive members of our workforce, our communities, and by extension, our Nation.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I stand once again before this House with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is April 23, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand. That's just today, Mr. Speaker. That's more than the number of innocent lives lost on September 11 in this country, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,875 days since the tragedy called Roe v. Wade was first handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood